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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/972,368	10/05/2001	Jin H. Hwang	5440P002	4726
8791	7590	02/08/2005		EXAMINER
		BLAKELY SOKOLOFF TAYLOR & ZAFMAN		KIM, KEVIN
		12400 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD		
		SEVENTH FLOOR	ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
		LOS ANGELES, CA 90025-1030	2634	

DATE MAILED: 02/08/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/972,368	HWANG, JIN H.	
	Examiner Kevin Y Kim	Art Unit 2634	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 October 2001.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-49 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1,2,7,15-20,27-33 and 41-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 3-6,8-14,21-26,34-40 and 45-49 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 05 October 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____. |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1,2,7, 15,17-19,27-30,32,33,41,42,44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Mejia (US 6,625,241).

Claim 1.

Mejia discloses an apparatus (see Fig. 2), comprising:

- 1) a buffer (203) to receive a data stream (105) which is written to the buffer according to a first clock signal k (see col. 6, lines 21-23).
- 2) a character monitor (205) coupled to the buffer (203) to monitor the occurrence of an inter-packet gap in the data stream containing removable filler characters and identify the removable filler characters in the buffer (see col. 7, lines , lines 4-6).
- 3) a channel controller (208) to read data from the buffer according to a second clock (104) and transmit it over an output channel (209), wherein the channel controller skips transmission of one or more of removable filler characters s marked as removable within an inter-packet if the first clock is faster than the second clock. See col. 7, lines 60-67 in particular. See also col. 6, line 65 – col. 7, line 28 describing that fill words are deleted

from transmission when an overflow condition is detected, which happens when the input clock is faster than the local output clock.

Claim 2.

Mejia discloses an exemplary buffer comprised of two buffers, one at Local Sync (102A) and the other (102B), see Fig. 1, thus storing two sets of characters.

Claim 7.

Mejia discloses the buffer as a first-in, first-out type. See col.7, lines 16-17.

Claim 15.

It is well established that synchronizers in digital communication are built on an integrated circuit.

Claims 17 and 41.

Mejia discloses a method of synchronizing the transmission rate of a first clock to the transmission rate of a second clock (see Fig. 2), comprising:

- 1) receiving sets (105A and 105B in Fig.1) of one or more characters over an input channel synchronized by the first clock (see col. 6, lines 21-23).
- 2) buffering the sets of the received characters (see 203).
- 3) transmitting the buffered sets of characters over an output channel synchronized by the second clock (101).

4) skipping transmission of a set of characters marked as removable within an inter-packet if an overflow condition is detected (see col. 6, line 65 – col. 7, line 28 describing that fill words are deleted from transmission when an overflow is detected).

Claims 18 and 42.

As explained above, the sets of one or more characters are received and buffered “per first clock cycle.”

Claim 19.

As explained above, two sets of one or more characters are transmitted “per second clock cycle.”

Claim 27.

Mejia discloses a synchronizing system (see Fig. 2), comprising:

- 1) means (105A and 105B in Fig. 1) for receiving sets of one or more characters over an input channel synchronized by the first clock (see col. 6, lines 21-23).
- 2) means (203) for buffering the sets of the received characters.
- 3) means (209) for transmitting the buffered sets of characters over an output channel synchronized by the second clock (101).
- 4) means (208) for removing one or more sets of filler characters from the output data stream if an overflow condition is detected (see col. 6, line 65 – col. 7, line 28 describing that fill words are deleted from transmission when an overflow is detected).

Claim 28 and 29

Mejia discloses means (205) for detecting an inter-packet gap within the input signal and fill words. See col. 7, lines 4-6.

Claim 30.

Mejia discloses means for removing one or more sets of filler characters from the output data stream if the first clock is faster than the second clock. See col. 7, lines 60-67.

Claim 32.

Mejia discloses an exemplary transmitter comprised of two transmitters, one at Local Sync (102A) and the other (102B), see Fig. 1, thus transmitting two sets of characters per second clock cycle.

Claim 33.

Mejia discloses means for removing one or more sets of filler characters from the output data stream if the first clock is faster than the second clock. I.e., the detection of a overflow condition in fact indicates differences between the baud rate of the input signal, i.e., the first clock signal, and the local clock signal, i.e., the second clock signal. See col. 7, lines 60-67.

Claim 44.

According to Mejia , the fill words are by definition “removable characters” in that they are inserted/removed for sync purpose.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 20, 31 and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mejia as applied to claims 17, 30 and 41 above respectively and in view of Vila et al (US 6,757,348).

Mejia discloses all the claimed subject matter except for marking a set of one or more characters as removable “if it contains one or more filler characters and follows a set of one or more filler characters in the input signal.” In other words, while Mejia removes fill words when an overflow condition is detected, the claimed invention further requires the removal of the fill words if they follow another set of fill words.

Vila et al teaches that a fill word is not deleted if there are only the minimum number of fill words according to some protocol and continues that the number of fill words is identified in the inter-frame space and, if necessary, removes the fill words after a delay, i.e., removes fill words that follows the minimum number of fill words in the inter-frame space.

Thus, it would have been obvious to one skill in the art at the time the invention was made to mark a set of one or more characters as removable if it not only contains one or more

filler characters but also follows a set of one or more filler characters in the input signal in order not to delete the minimum fill words between frames required in some protocol as taught by Vila et al.

5. Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mejia as applied to claim 1 above.

Mejia discloses all the subject matter claimed except that “the first and second clocks have a maximum rate difference of one cycle per one thousand cycles.” In other words, Mejia describes that the baud rate of an incoming data stream could be slightly faster than the frequency of the local clock (see col. 7, lines 61-63) but fails to quantify the rate difference. However, since the minimizing the rate difference is preferable, the setting of a maximum rate difference (including “one cycle per one thousand cycles” in the claimed invention) is an obvious matter of design choice, particularly in that applicant has not disclosed the criticality of setting the claimed maximum rate difference of one cycle per one thousand cycles.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 3-6,8-14,21-26,34-40,45-49 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Rude (US 6,415,006) discloses synchronization between read and write clocks using a buffer.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin Y Kim whose telephone number is 571-272-3039. The examiner can normally be reached on 8AM --5PM M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Chin can be reached on 571-272-3056. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

[Handwritten signature of Kevin Y Kim]
KEVIN Y KIM
PATENT EXAMINER